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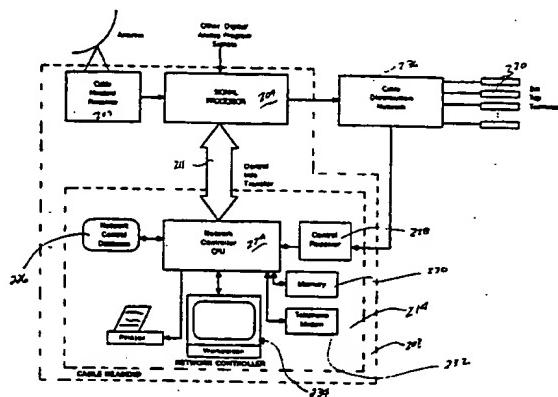
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(54) Title: NETWORK CONTROLLER FOR CABLE TELEVISION DELIVERY SYSTEMS



(57) Abstract

A novel network controller (214) for use with a digital cable headend (208) capable of monitoring and controlling set top terminals (220) in a television program delivery system (200) is described. The invention relates to methods and apparatus for a network controller (214) that manages a configuration of set top terminals (220) in a program delivery system (200). The invention is particularly useful in program delivery systems (200) with hundreds of channels of programming, a menu driven program selection system, and a program control information signal that carries data and identifies available program choices. Specifically, the invention modifies a program control information signal at the cable headend (208) before the modified signal is transmitted to each set top terminal (220). This signal is used with polling methods to receive upstream data from the set top terminals (220). The invention initiates such upstream data retrieval, gathers all data received and compiles viewer demographics information and programs watched information. The invention processes this data and information to generate packages of advertisements, as well as account and billing reports, targeted towards each set top terminal (220). The invention uses upstream data reception hardware, databases and processing hardware and software to accomplish these functions.